United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory, Rocky Mountain Research Station | P.O. Box 8089, Missoula, MT 59807

Dear Colleague:

I am writing to ask for your help in acquiring existing field data for a national fire regime and fuels mapping project. The project, called LANDFIRE, integrates field reference data, satellite imagery, and models of fire and vegetation dynamics to generate consistent, mid-scale fire regime and fuels maps that can inform fire and land management throughout the US. LANDFIRE's products are ideal for regional planning but can also be stepped down to augment finer-scale mapping efforts and thereby assist local planning. Examples of these end-products are maps of historical fire regimes and of fire regime condition classes (indices of departure from historical fire regimes), which are needed to prioritize and evaluate the restoration of forests and rangelands as directed by the National Fire Plan and the Healthy Forests legislation. Partners in this effort include the USDA Forest Service's Fire Sciences Laboratory in Missoula, Montana, the USGS EROS Data Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and The Nature Conservancy in Boulder, Colorado.

At the heart of LANDFIRE is a database containing geo-referenced field data that characterize fuels and vegetation composition and condition. The project relies heavily upon existing inventory, monitoring, and research programs for these reference data, which is why I have contacted you for help. The LANDFIRE team would like to incorporate into the database any vegetation or fuel data that you have collected. Examples of these data are listed in Table 1. Descriptions of physical plot characteristics, disturbance histories, and data collection procedures are also valuable and likewise appreciated. The only requirement for inclusion of data in the LANDFIRE reference database (LFRDB) is a geo-reference for each sampling point. In other words, all plot locations must have been determined with a Global Positioning System device in the field.

Table 1. Examples of data needed for the LANDFIRE reference database.

Data type	Attribute
Plot	Geo-referenced plot location
	Sampling date
Vegetation	Type (e.g., NVC Alliance)
	Species list
	Cover by species
	Cover by life form (tree, shrub, herb)
	Height by species
	Heights of individual trees
	Crown ratios (individual trees)
	Crown classes (individual trees)
	Diameters (individual trees)
	Tree density
Fuels	Fine (1-, 10-, and 100-hour)
	Coarse (1000-hour)
	Cover of live and dead shrubs
	Cover of live and dead herbs
	Base height of canopy fuels
	Height of shrubs
	Height of herbaceous vegetation

If you have (or know of) geo-referenced plot data that should meet LFRDB needs please contact me at (406) 549-7478 (kshort@landfire.org). If you would like to learn more about LANDFIRE or to see examples of anticipated end-products, please contact Matt Rollins at (406) 329-4960 (mrollins@fs.fed.us) or visit www.landfire.gov.

Thank you,

Karen C. Short
LANDFIRE Reference Data Administrator